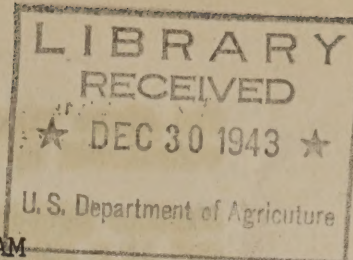


1.933  
P884

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Rural Electrification Administration  
St. Louis, Missouri



A

THE RURAL ELECTRIFICATION ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM  
TO MEET PRESENT CONDITIONS

By W. E. Herring, Chief, Cooperatives' Operations Division

Up to the present time, much stress has been laid upon the necessity for line extensions on practically all of our projects. This follows the REA policy of endeavoring to get the widest possible area coverage. The present emergency will naturally change this condition materially. As we view the situation, with the lack of conductors, it will be necessary to forget for the time being any new line extensions unless they are to serve strictly defense projects.

This means to me that all of our personnel is going to have more time to devote to other very necessary and essential problems. A few of them might be listed as follows: The improvement of public relations; the completion of system maps; bringing your transformer and meter records up to date; a study of system fuse coordination; voltage surveys together with phase balancing to improve voltage regulation and substation transformer loading.

A study of your distribution transformer loading in many locations is well warranted in order that any necessary changes may be made in transformers before they are lost. The inexpensive ampere demand meter has proven to be very effective in doing this work.

Your membership records and deposit receipts, if any, should be gone over carefully and brought up to date. Membership certificates should be issued.

In this era where automobile tires are rationed and nation-wide gasoline rationing will soon go into effect, it is almost essential, in my opinion, that careful thought and consideration be given to postcard meter reading. This will save each one of the projects a considerable amount of truck and car travel each month. I am gratified to learn that almost 90% of the projects in Region IV, represented by the Superintendents at this Conference, are now using the postcard meter reading system. I would certainly like to urge all of you to adopt this system.

The use of bicycles in your work might be considered. I noticed a few days ago that one of the smaller eastern utility companies had ordered 35 bicycles for its employees. I might add here in connection with tire rationing that we have so far been unable to get anything from the powers-that-be which would indicate that tires for Superintendents' personal cars can be obtained.

USDA  
LIB



The above items are a few of those that occur to me that can be well considered by all of you in this present emergency.

Another matter which I have been hoping for some time that we could work out is a so-called five-year plan on each project. This will require considerable study. It will necessitate the preparation of maps by the superintendents and personnel thoroughly acquainted with the territory, showing lines that might be constructed at a future date. The preparation of such a map tied in with your present system will be a valuable guide to you in the future construction of any lines and will prevent the construction of lines that will not fit into your picture at a later date. It should prevent any extensive changing of conductor sizes, and insure the proper facilities for future extensions. I think you can all appreciate what a plan of this kind on paper would mean to you in estimating new line construction year by year for a definite period. It is realized that this will be more or less of an estimate because changes are bound to occur, but in view of the fact that nothing of this kind is available now, such a plan even if modified from time to time would be of great help.

Another very important reason why this five-year plan should be worked out is because post-war planning is now being undertaken by our Applications and Loans Division and a number of government agencies. This is to provide work and material for that period after we have won the war. It is our belief that an important part of such work will be the construction of thousands of additional miles of rural lines throughout the country. Those organizations which have their plans prepared in detail and are in position to know what could be done are going to be the first ones who will be supplied with the funds for the work. Hence, if your plan is complete and in shape, it is quite likely that you would be among the first to start this type of construction.

It has been indicated that there will be a decided shortage of at least the majority of domestic appliances. In order to partially overcome this situation insofar as help to the farmer is concerned and incidentally help to the projects' revenue, there are home-made appliances such as chicken brooders, dehydrators and pig brooders that can be made at very small cost, and would be beneficial to both the members and the project. REA has prepared leaflets on a number of pieces of equipment that can be home made, and we shall be glad to send these leaflets to you for distribution to such of your members as are interested.

The rapid expansion of the REA program, together with the demand for manpower in the war effort, has caused a severe drain upon the supply of competent line and service personnel. All of our projects are faced with the problem of securing and training men in order to carry on their normal operation. Realizing that safety and efficiency are synonymous, an efficient workman will be a safe workman. Therefore, we have instituted in a number of states our Safety and Job Training Program. I commend this program to you because it is bound to reduce your insurance and other operating costs.



I would like to call your attention to the War Regulations Bulletins which REA is sending to you. Our staff here is constantly securing new information and interpretations particularly with respect to the War Production Board and Office of Price Administration Agencies. These bulletins should be carefully studied and you should familiarize yourself with their contents in order that you may keep yourself out of trouble. They are being issued from time to time as new conditions are imposed.

In closing I should like to state that under the present conditions with all of the items that I have mentioned or even a part of them, you can all keep more than busy during the emergency. You have an opportunity now to catch up with a lot of work that has been neglected due to pressure of other necessary work on all of the projects, and I am sure that if these suggestions are followed that they will result in better conditions both operating and financial on all of your properties.

